

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1-29. (Canceled)

30. (Currently Amended) A method in a server computer of authenticating client computer systems, the method comprising:

receiving from a controlling client computer system an instruction that indicates an authentication methodology that is to be used to authenticate a client computer system that is a separate computer system from the controlling client computer system, the authentication methodology being selected from multiple authentication methodologies based on authentication abilities indicating authentication methodologies that the client computer supports and access rights of the client computer system to access resources;

after receiving the instruction and before authenticating the client computer system, receiving a request from the client computer system to access a service of the server computer system; and

upon receiving the request from the client computer system to access a service of the server computer, initially authenticating the client computer system using the indicated authentication methodology.

31. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 30 wherein the instruction indicates that multiple authentication methodologies can be used to authenticate the client computer system and wherein the client computer system is authenticated using one of the indicated authentication methodologies.

32. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 30 wherein the instruction indicates that the authentication methodology is to be used to authenticate multiple client computer systems and wherein the multiple client computer systems are authenticated using the indicated authentication methodology.

33. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 30 wherein the instruction indicates multiple authentication methodologies can be used to authenticate multiple client computer systems and wherein the multiple client computer systems are authenticated using one of the indicated authentication methodologies.

34. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 30 wherein the authentication methodology is an assertion authentication.

35. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 30 wherein the authentication methodology is a basic HTTP authentication.

36. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 30 wherein the authentication methodology is digest authentication.

37. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 30 wherein the authentication methodology is an NTLM authentication.

38. (Currently Amended) A method in a controlling client computer system for providing indications of authentication methodologies to a server computer system, the method comprising:

generating an instruction that indicates an authentication methodology that is to be used to authenticate a client computer system that is a separate computer system from the controlling client computer system, the authentication methodology being selected from multiple authentication methodologies based on authentication abilities indicating authentication methodologies that the client computer system supports and access rights of the client computer system to access resources; and

sending the generated instruction to the server computer system so that upon receiving a request from the client computer system to access a service of

the server computer system after the instruction is received at the server computer system and before authenticating the client computer system, the server computer system can initially authenticate the client computer system using the indicated authentication methodology.

39. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 38 wherein the instruction indicates that multiple authentication methodologies can be used to authenticate the client computer system and wherein the client computer system is authenticated by the server computer system using one of the indicated authentication methodologies.

40. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 38 wherein the instruction indicates that the authentication methodology is to be used to authenticate multiple client computer systems and wherein the multiple client computer systems are authenticated by the server computer system using the indicated authentication methodology.

41. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 38 wherein the instruction indicates multiple authentication methodologies can be used to authenticate multiple client computer systems and wherein the multiple client computer systems are authenticated by the server computer system using one of the indicated authentication methodologies.

42. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 38 wherein the authentication methodology is an assertion authentication.

43. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 38 wherein the authentication methodology is a basic HTTP authentication.

44. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 38 wherein the authentication methodology is digest authentication.

45. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 38 wherein the authentication methodology is an NTLM authentication.

46. (Currently Amended) A tangible computer-readable medium containing instructions for controlling a server computer system to authenticate entities, by a method comprising:

receiving from a controlling entity an instruction that indicates an authentication methodology that is to be used to authenticate an entity, the authentication methodology being selected from multiple authentication methodologies based on authentication abilities of the entity that indicate which authentication methodologies are supported by the entity, the controlling entity being a separate entity from the entity;

after receiving the instruction from the controlling entity and before authenticating the client computer system, receiving a request from the entity to access a service of the server computer system; and

upon receiving the request from the entity to access a service of the server computer system, initially authenticating the entity using the indicated authentication methodology.

47. (Previously Presented) The computer-readable medium of claim 46 wherein the instruction indicates that multiple authentication methodologies can be used to authenticate the entity and wherein the entity is authenticated using one of the indicated authentication methodologies.

48. (Previously Presented) The computer-readable medium of claim 46 wherein the instruction indicates that the authentication methodology is to be used to authenticate multiple entities and wherein the multiple entities are authenticated using the indicated authentication methodology.

49. (Previously Presented) The computer-readable medium of claim 46 wherein the instruction indicates multiple authentication methodologies can be used to authenticate multiple entities and wherein the multiple entities are authenticated using one of the indicated authentication methodologies.

50. (Previously Presented) The computer-readable medium of claim 49 wherein the authentication methodology is selected from a group consisting of an assertion authentication, a basic HTTP authentication, a digest authentication, and an NTLM authentication.